

# One Man's Enthusiasm Resulted in Creation of a National Park

By C. C. Wertenbaker

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When Jones was in Washington recently, speaking at the Department of the Interior for the third consecutive year, his auditors heard much about the beauty, history, romance, accessibility and whatnot of Zion National Park, in Utah, but they heard very little about Jones himself. That was because Randall Jones is more interested in Zion National Park than he is in Randall Jones.

But before he left, bit by bit, most of the history of his rather astonishing career was gathered from this big, heavy-shouldered, mild-mannered man who looks like anything in the world but a go-getter.

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Jones went to school in Cedar City, but when Summer came he was taken to his father's cattle ranch on the side of a mountain 50 miles away. From the top of that mountain Jones used to look across smaller mountains into a great abyss which some colorful tales had been spread by a few hardy explorers.

Jones was adventurous. One day he set out from the ranch, rode for two days and nights, and ended up in the heart of what is now known as Zion Canyon. For three days he stayed there alone, looking up at Mount Majestic, Angel's Landing, the Great White Throne and some other massive peaks, many of which he later named himself.

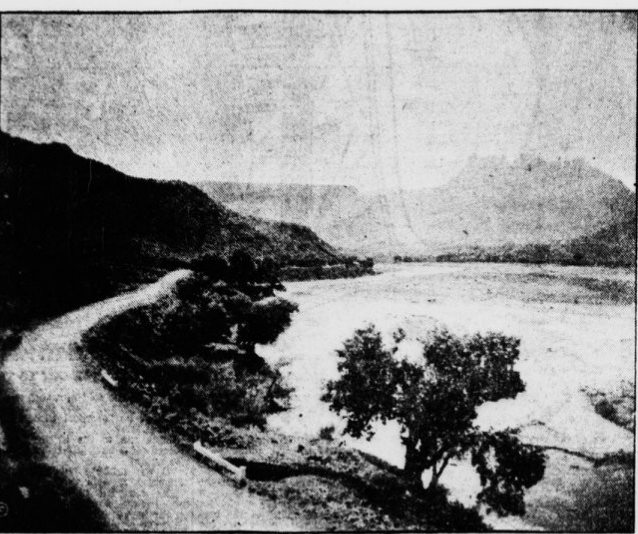
Those three days decided his career. While he was finishing the business of growing up and getting an education he began to bother people about Zion Canyon.

"Why isn't it a national park?" That was what he wanted to know. All he found out was that the only way to get a national park was to have the Government set the land aside as a national park.

At that stage of his career Jones was a hopeless idealist. For that matter, he still is. But at that time it seemed to him a near crime that everybody in the world didn't have the opportunity to go and look at the sights of Zion Canyon as did the people around Cedar City. The trouble was that Cedar City was a bit inaccessible, the canyon was more inaccessible and nobody knew much about either one.

But Jones had to make a living. He studied architecture and settled down in Cedar City as a practicing architect, and a good one, too. He might have gone far in that profession if he hadn't been bitten by the national park bee. As it was, he interspersed his architecture with the business of bothering everybody to death about the park idea. When he got a commission he hung around and talked about

Randall Jones, Traveling Representative of Utah Resort for Nation, Has Had Singular Experience—Story of Contributors to a Project Who Took It Out in Trade—Hired by Railroad to Do as He Pleases.



FEDERAL HIGHWAY APPROACHING ZION PARK.

Photo by Zion Station.

the park. Lots of times he talked so much that he didn't get the commission. But he did get a reputation. He moved his center of operations from Cedar City to Salt Lake City and then he headed East. He bothered governors and wore out the patience of members of Congress. He had a collection of photographs that was so big that people would promise anything rather than have to look at them. And so, eventually, he got the promise he wanted—that Zion would be made a national park. And much later it did become a national park.

At that point Jones did some thinking, and figured out that, instead of having finished his job, he had just begun it. The trouble was that, although Zion was a national park, nobody could get to it. The way to Cedar City was paved with stop-overs, trans-

fers, branch lines and delays, and after that it was another big trek to the park. What was needed was a railroad and a place to put the tourists who would come after the railroad was built.

And so Jones went to work to build a tourist hotel. He designed it himself and he planned it out of all proportion to the size of the town. People began to think Jones was a fool.

The people were almost right. In the middle of its construction work on El Escalante Hotel stopped. Hard times had been too much for it.

But Jones stuck to the job. He pulled the most remarkable piece of home-town financing ever recorded in those parts. The citizens of Cedar City had subscribed the money needed to build the hotel, but the slump had made it

impossible for them to pay up so that the work could go on.

"All right," said Jones, "we'll take it out in trade."

And that is what they did. The butcher couldn't pay his subscription, so he gave orders for meat, which the carpenters were persuaded to accept in lieu of coin of the realm. That was how the workmen were paid—with meat, groceries, receipted doctors' bills, free rent and anything else they needed. For a time money ceased to circulate among those who were working on the hotel.

At the critical juncture the Union Pacific Railroad stepped in with an offer to lay a road from its main line at Lund to Cedar City and to buy the hotel. The offer was accepted. All Jones needed was a hotel and a railroad and he had gotten them both at

once. Then a highway was built along Great Hurricane Fault to the canyon and everything was ready for the rush.

The rush came faster than even Jones had anticipated. President Harding was persuaded to visit the park. Others followed, and tents housed the first rush. Later lodges and hotels were built.

Before long Zion was the chief attraction of a huge area containing six great attractions, to see which now requires a two-day motor trip. Jones' dream had come true.

Architecture had been forgotten, and he wondered what to do next. The Union Pacific settled that question for him. There was nobody in the country who knew as much about Zion as Jones, and there was nobody who was quite so proficient at telling other people about it.

So the railroad hired him to do as he pleased—one of the most unusual jobs ever given to anybody.

But it was enough for him. Doing as he pleased meant telling more people about the park he had built. He does it in all parts of the country, and when any Government official here in Washington wants to know about the park, Jones tells him.

WHAT sort of a place is this Zion National Park that exercised such a power over the youth, Randall Jones, that he devoted his life to it? In sheer natural, unadorned beauty it is probably the most impressive piece of real estate in the United States. It is not nearly so large as Yellowstone, but it has more sights to the square mile. It has nothing quite so impressive as the Grand Canyon, but it has half a dozen sights that are all pretty nearly so.

Above all, it has color—color that ranges all the way from delicate pastel shades of the rainbow to the brilliant hues of the sunrise.

The national park is a quadrangular area of about 120 square miles, 62 miles from Jones' home town of Cedar City and 60 miles by air line from the northern rim of the Grand Canyon. There are many cliff dwellings in Zion Canyon, and it is believed that it was regarded as a sacred spot by the Indians about 1850 and began to reclaim it by irrigation. The explorer Maj. Powell traversed the country in 1870, and a few years later Capt. Dutton, another explorer, studied it and wrote a book about it.

From then until 1909 it was practically unknown. About that time, however, Jones began to get results, and from then on there was an increasing tide of travel until 1919, when it became a national park and was thrown open to the world.

The outstanding feature of the park is Zion Canyon, a great red and white gorge cut out of sandstone colored many hues by the Mukuntuweap River. The canyon is about 14 miles long and



TEMPLE OF SINAWAVA, ZION PARK. CANYON VARIES 50 TO 100 FEET WIDE AND WALLS ARE 2,000 FEET HIGH.

Photo by Zion Station.

varies in width from that of a man's outstretched hand at the upper reaches to a mile at the lower end. At the upper reaches the river has cut a channel under towering cliffs averaging 1,500 feet in height.

In places the canyon widens into courts and shrines that have been given names in keeping with their strange beauty, such as the Court of the Patriarchs and the Temple of Sinawava. Individual peaks stand out from the walls of the canyon, cut away a million years ago and now named Angel's Landing, the Great White Throne, the Mountain of Mystery, etc. Many of them never have been climbed and never will be. These peaks are the color spectacles of the park. Every

imaginable tint and shade is represented, and at the summit many of them are snow-white or green with evergreens.

At the edge of the park, near Springdale, is the Watchman, a stately cathedral-like pile of red sandstone. About a mile beyond is Bridge Mountain, upon whose upper slope is a great stone natural bridge with a span of 100 feet. Among the so-called Towers of the Virgin stands the Altar of Sacrifice, a buttressed white pile whose summit and wall are stained deep with flowing crimson, which suggested the bloody place of sacrifice of some pagan god. On the right is East Temple, a carmine-topped pink and white pile of stone.

On the left are some of the chief attractions of the park. There is the "Breasted Wall," bearing strange white zones, "Sentinel Peak" and the "Court of the Patriarchs" from which rise the three patriarchs, jagged pink and white pyramids. There are the "Twin Brothers" and the "Mountain of the Sun," which is the first spot to receive the dawning rays of the sun and the last place on which the dying day lingers. There are "Lady Mountain," "Mount Majestic" and "Red Arch Mountain," and the ox-bow mass of stone that is called the "Great Organ" and around which the river winds in a serpentine description.

From the narrow of the canyon continues some eight miles further, but can be explored only with difficulty and under the guidance of a trained guide. The river is the only trail and number rainstorms that pour torrents down into the canyon are a real danger.

FROM the rim of the canyon the park presents a maze of fantastic white red buttes and cones cross-fringed by deep, narrow gorges. Bell shaped and bottle shaped with wide flaring bases support small forests on their level summits. From the east rim one gets the finest views of the canyon.

Starting from the canyon is a succession of natural wonders, including Cedar Breaks, a series of vast amphitheaters scooped to a depth of 2,000 feet and covering an area of about 60 square miles in the Sevier National Forest. From the blunted crest of Brian Head can be seen practically all of southern Utah, Nevada and northern Arizona.

Sixty-nine miles from Cedar Breaks is Bryce Canyon, along a road bordered by wooded parks and great barren areas covered with lava from Hancock Peak. Bryce Canyon is not a canyon in the accepted sense, but an amphitheater of horseshoe shape, given 1,000 feet deep into pink and white sandstone. There are many striking likenesses in the rock forms cut out by nature—glaciers, grooves, marching soldiers, Queen Victoria and the Pope. Looking down on all is the huge cathedral, solid, natural rock.

Southward in Arizona is Kaibab Forest, and further west Grand Canyon National Park. Kaibab Forest occupies the top of a lofty plateau isolated on two sides by the Grand Canyon and on the other two by mysterious plains. On all sides are unexplored plateaus and canyons where old cliff dwellings stand. Grand Canyon is too well known to need description.

This is the great park system which was made possible largely through the efforts of Randall Jones. Zion National Park was the gateway to the others and since it has been opened, the number of tourists has increased with amazing rapidity.

As for Jones he doesn't look upon himself as a public benefactor. It was the country itself that he loved and it has been for its glory that he has worked rather than for the tiny people who gaze in awe at it all. And he hasn't finished yet. When he has told enough people in this country about Zion he is going to ballhoop it all over Europe.

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